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NOVEMBER 2010 *Excellence in North Dakota public education through local school board governance* ■ VOL XXXV ISSUE 11

U.S. Education Secretary Duncan Visits North Dakota

U.S. Representative Earl Pomeroy arranged for Education Secretary Arne Duncan to visit North Dakota on October 12. The Secretary spent most of the day at New Salem-Almont High School sitting in on distance education classes, visiting with students, and participating in a roundtable discussion with education stakeholders from around the state.



During the roundtable discussion, Duncan responded to questions and concerns of board members, teachers, and administrators. The secretary's responses consistently seemed to support flexibility in funding for rural states like North Dakota. He acknowledged that implementing certain federal requirements like charter schools, replacing entire staffs, and distribution of effective teachers are not practical in small schools and rural states. He said he is looking at alternative requirements for rural states in future rounds of competitive grants and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Several participants questioned the wisdom of awarding scarce federal dollars on a competitive basis--a practice that leaves the majority of school districts in the country out of the funding stream. Duncan replied that there should always be "formula" funding for programs such as Title I but that competitive funding is the fastest way to move a reform agenda forward. He said the real question is what the ratio of formula dollars to competitive dollars should be: 70:30 or 30:70, for example. Because North Dakota is not likely to score well on competitive requirements, it favors our districts if all or most of the federal dollars are formula based and if mandated policy changes are practical for our state to implement.

When asked by a student why he came to North Dakota, Secretary Duncan said it was important for him to understand the strengths and challenges of small and rural schools. Representative Earl Pomeroy said laws can't just be aimed at large urban schools, so it's vital that unique situations of small and rural schools be given consideration.

NDSBA has worked closely with our congressional delegation to ensure that reauthorization of ESEA and other future federal funding schemes treat small and rural schools in a fair manner.

With a new majority in the U.S. House of Representatives and two new North

Dakota congressmen, NSBA and NDSBA will have the opportunity to re-make the case for local governance of public schools.

Korsmo Elected NDSBA President

Delegates to the 2010 NDSBA Convention elected West Fargo School Board member Angela Korsmo as president of the association. Korsmo has served on her local board for 13 years and on the NDSBA Board of Directors for 4 years.



Kenmare board member Dave King was elected vice president. He has served two terms as Northwest Director on the NDSBA board. Incumbent Southeast Director Greg Allen was reelected to that position.

Minot board member Jim Rostad was elected to his first term as Northwest Director. Jim is in his tenth year on the Minot School Board.

NDSBA is grateful for the dedication of board members who provide outstanding leadership to the association.

Superintendent Evaluations Due in December

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-14-03 states, "Before December fifteenth of each year, the board of a school district shall conduct a formative evaluation of the superintendent's performance."

The purpose of a formative evaluation is to highlight areas of the superintendent's performance in need of improvement. Areas requiring improvement would be categorized as

"unsatisfactory" and the superintendent would be provided an improvement plan.

Expectation is that the superintendent will make required improvements before the formal evaluation in March.

If you have questions regarding the board's responsibilities, call Gary Thune at (888)333-0134.



from the director's chair

■ by Jon Martinson, NDSBA Executive Director

Convention Delegates Embrace Their Role as Leaders

This year's annual convention was interesting for a number of reasons, arguably the most significant of which was a resolution passed by the Delegate Assembly supporting an alternative compensation plan for teachers. Although a number of states have already implemented various forms of alternative compensation, this concept is new to North Dakota, which is why members of the Delegate Assembly deserve praise for their courage and foresight.

NDSBA has a history of taking on difficult and challenging issues. Many of you will remember back in 2002 when some school districts were cited by the state fire marshal for being in violation of the fire code. Some violations were

minor, yet others jeopardized the safety of students and staff. Our involvement helped bring those school buildings up to code.

In 2003, a bill was introduced at our request allowing local boards authority to offer a signing bonus outside the negotiated agreement. This remains an important management tool given the shortage of teachers and "teacher quality" requirements in federal law.

During a trip to Washington, D.C., in 2005, representatives from school boards around the state visited our congressional delegation to voice concern about the U.S. Department of Education (ED) policy that found about 3,800 North Dakota elementary teachers did not meet new qualification standards of No Child Left Behind. Due to pressure from Senators Conrad and Dorgan and Representative Pomeroy, the ED reversed their ruling and found our teachers to be "highly qualified."

After a long extended struggle, the 2007 legislature signed a bill allowing school districts the right to offer salaries off the salary schedule under certain circumstances, ensuring that students have qualified teachers. This change in state law has been especially useful in light of the fact that many highly qualified teachers in fields such as special education, math, and science are marketable in the private sector at high salaries.

Also during that session, the legislature adopted a funding formula that included full-time kindergarten, a resolution supported by NDSBA.

For many years, NDSBA has been a strong supporter of Regional Education Associations. Funding has increased from \$250,000 in 2003 to \$3 million in 2009. Also during the 2009 legislative session, NDSBA secured sponsors for a bill that provided employees of REAs

the same rights as those accorded to individuals employed by a public school district. In essence, this bill (which passed) allows REAs to hire and provide benefits to employees. By the way, in the upcoming 2011 session, we will support an increase of \$400,000 for REAs as recommended by the ND Commission on Education Improvement.

Among other issues we will support next session is alternative compensation for teachers. This has been a topic in previous *Bulletin* articles. In April 2007 I wrote that teachers' salaries are linked to classroom experience, level of education, and cost-of-living increases. These are neither inspiring nor motivational. Since teachers are required to wait 15 or more years to reach an average income in their profession, some highly motivated, bright stars decide to leave the classroom.

Rather than continue to pay teachers based on seniority, let's reward teachers based on performance. I concluded that "it's time for the education community to collaboratively initiate conversation about an innovative, reasonable teacher pay plan that teachers, administrators, and school boards could embrace to meet future needs."

Three years later, that time has arrived. Board members representing the three education associations (NDSBA, NDCEL, and NDEA) collaborated in August for the first-ever joint board meeting to discuss this new concept. Since then, each association has passed a resolution about alternative compensation.

During our convention, there was lively discussion and debate. Valid concerns were expressed and those of us who support moving forward with this new proposal acknowledged there are many details of the plan that have yet to be determined. Despite not having answers to all questions raised, members of the Delegate Assembly showed their willingness to lead when the path ahead is not clearly illuminated--thereby giving the association an opportunity to help form an education policy that will change the face of teacher/board negotiations for those districts that choose to give it a try.

Once again, NDSBA will play a leadership role in crafting significant education policy that will have an impact for years to come.

bulletin

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NDSBA Delegates Adopt Resolutions

NDSBA's Delegate Assembly voted on proposed resolutions at the 2010 Annual Convention in Bismarck on October 30. Below are resolutions adopted at that time. A complete list of NDSBA's Standing Resolutions and Beliefs and Policies can be found under "Legislation" at: www.ndsba.org.

New Resolutions

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

NDSBA shall support the North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement as the vehicle for comprehensive study of K-12 education equity and adequacy.

TEACHERS' FUND FOR RETIREMENT AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

NDSBA shall support TFFR and PERS contribution increases as long as there are no enhancements to benefits until the plans are at least 90 percent funded and only if accompanied by employee contribution increases, benefit concessions, and adequate state funding to cover employer contribution increases in addition to normal foundation aid increases.

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE

NDSBA shall support an alternative compensation plan with appropriate funding.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

NDSBA shall support separate state funding for preschool programs meeting prescribed standards.

ND TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM

NDSBA shall support providing a line item in DPI's budget for the North Dakota Teacher of the Year Program. Legislation must include the following directive to DPI: The DPI shall assign responsibility to its department staff to coordinate preparation of application

materials, distribution of materials to the selection committee, publicity, and serve as exclusive host of a reception held in the Great Hall in the State Capitol by September 30 at which the Teacher of the Year is announced. The selection committee appointed by the department may not include more than one representative from any education-related organization or association.

KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT TIME

NDSBA shall support legislation to empower school districts to conduct up to two fewer student contact days (no fewer than 172 days) for kindergarten than required by the state (174 days), provided that the other one or two days are dedicated to readiness and formative assessment of incoming kindergarten children prior to the start of school.

Resolutions Readopted as Written FUNDING ADEQUACY, BOARD TAXING AUTHORITY, AND PROPERTY TAX

NDSBA will support direct state funding of K-12 education at a level adequate to reduce reliance on local property taxes.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

NDSBA will support legislation that will allow all school districts in North Dakota an equal opportunity to participate with after-school programming.

Resolutions Readopted as Amended MANDATORY ATTENDANCE AGE

NDSBA shall seek legislation requiring the Department of Public Instruction to provide strategies, tools, and funding to identify and assist at-risk students throughout their education experience through the time they graduate or until they reach age 18.

Standing Resolutions adopted at the 2010 Convention will remain until 2014 unless accomplished before that time.

Personal Finance Curriculum Guide Available

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has posted a Personal Finance Curriculum Guide that schools can access as a means to meet new statutory requirements for inclusion of personal finance education in curriculum.

NDCC 15.1-21 requires the following: Beginning July 1, 2010, each school district shall ensure that its curriculum for either economics or problems of democracy includes the exposure of students to concepts of personal finance, including:

- Checkbook mechanics, including writing checks, balancing, and statement reconciliation
- Saving for larger purchases
- Credit, including credit card usage, interest, and fees
- Earning power, including jobs for teenagers
- Taxation and paycheck withholdings
- College costs
- Making and living within a budget
- Mortgages, retirement savings, and investment

Upon written request, DPI may allow districts to annually select other courses for the purpose of exposing students to the required concepts if the district can demonstrate at least as many students would be exposed to the concepts as through economics or problems of democracy.

Concepts of personal finance can be taught by a regular classroom teacher qualified to teach the course(s) in which the concepts are incorporated.

Access the Curriculum Guide at: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/approve/resources.shtml>. For more information, contact Linda Paluck at: lpaluck@nd.gov or (701)328-1718.

ND Teacher of the Year Named

Williston Middle School teacher Karen Toays has been named North Dakota

Teacher of the Year. She teaches language art and is in her eighth year of teaching.

Karen went into teaching because she wanted all children to have the positive learning experiences she had as a student. She has watched many of her students go on to succeed in college and careers, but it is the ones who drop out that haunt her. She believes all students need support and encouragement, but especially those who are at risk of leaving school.

Toays will compete with other state winners for National Teacher of the Year. This national honor for classroom teachers is a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Congratulations Karen!



EduTech News



EduTech and the North Dakota ETC will facilitate a technology showcase highlighting current best practices of education technology in our K-12 classrooms. The Showcase is planned for **February 16, 2011**, in the Great Hall of the capitol building and will feature a variety of education technology uses by ten schools from across the state. This is an excellent way to demonstrate instructional technology to legislators.

Teachers are encouraged to submit an application. Applications and selection criteria can be found at: www.edutech.nodak.edu/legislative_showcase.

EduTech also invites K-12 classroom teachers and students to participate in one or more upcoming 50-minute programs delivered by the North Dakota State Historical Society on **December 6-10, 2010**. Topics include: The Capitol of ND is Bismarck; Early People in ND; Fur Trade; Homesteading in North Dakota; Native American Dwellings; Learning U.S. History Inside and Out; and Inventions, Innovations, and Adaptations.

For additional information contact Kari Sauer at: kari.sauer@sendit.nodak.edu or (800)804-8550.

2010 NDSBA Convention

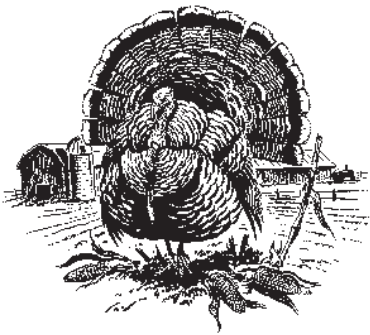
The 2010 NDSBA Annual Convention was held in Bismarck October 29-30. The opening General Session featured Collins Tuohy, who shared her family's inspiring story chronicled in the book and blockbuster movie *The Blind Side*. Saturday's General Session speaker Bob Upgren amazed and motivated attendees with his new school chalk art

and inspiring message.

Friday and Saturday clinic sessions were timely and informative. On Saturday, U.S. Senator Kent Conrad addressed federal issues impacting education and convention delegates voted on standing resolutions.



Happy Thanksgiving



Alyssa, Bev, Gary, Jon, Julie, and Linnae

Auch Receives Norby Scholarship Award

Mott/Regent board member Ben Auch received the Barb Norby Scholarship Award at NDSBA's 2010 Annual Convention. The award was created by the NDSBA Board of Directors in tribute to Barb Norby's valuable service to the association and honors a board member who demonstrates admirable leadership at the local and state level. The scholarship provides registration to the National School Boards Association's Federal Relations Network meeting or Annual Conference.



and numerous school board committees. He is an EMT for the Mott ambulance service and referees Junior High and Junior Varsity football.

Auch attends NDSBA board development activities including Convention and Negotiations Seminars. He has served on various NDSBA committees and been an active advocate during legislative sessions. Ben was

Continued on page 6

Ben Auch was first elected to the Mott/Regent School Board in 2004. During his tenure on the board, Ben has been active in the Roughrider REA, represented the district on the local Armory Board of Directors, served on the Head Start Policy Council



2010 NDSBA Convention— time to learn, be inspired, and network with peers.



Board Members Receive Service Awards

NDSBA recognizes board members for their professional development and service on two levels: Veteran Board Member and Master Board Member. A point system has been adopted whereby each opportunity carries a specific value. When a board member has earned 100 points, a certificate is awarded designating the individual as a Veteran Board Member. When 200 points are earned, the designation is Master Board Member and a certificate and lapel pin are awarded. Board Members who participate in national meetings earn their certificate "with distinction."



Dennis Erickson and Kirsten Baesler receive awards at NDSBA Convention.

When a board member has earned 100 points, a certificate is awarded designating the individual as a Veteran Board Member. When 200 points are earned, the designation is Master Board Member and a certificate and lapel pin are awarded. Board Members who participate in national meetings earn their certificate "with distinction."

Veteran Board Member Awards:

David Haugen, Edmore School Board
Dennis Erickson, Max School Board

Veteran Board Member with Distinction Award:

Roger Counts, Dunseith School Board

Master Board Member with Distinction Award:

Kirsten Baesler, Mandan School Board

Congratulations to Service Award Recipients!



ND Professional Development Advisory Committee Report

■ Kirsten Baesler, Mandan School Board and Advisory Committee member

In the October *Bulletin*, I wrote about the North Dakota Professional Development Advisory Committee's (NDPDAC) creation of a template for district professional development (PD) plans, survey of PD district practices, and website development. This report will provide an update on our work regarding professional teacher standards and legislative issues.

NDPDAC has developed professional teaching standards for the state. The process began with review of numerous teacher standards from other states and the National Staff Development Council. Standards were reviewed by NDPDAC for common themes and alignment with research-based best practices. The committee embraced all aspects for learning in a school environment. Seven North Dakota Professional Teacher Standards adopted by the committee promote an understanding of educator's competencies and skill development.

North Dakota Professional Teacher Standards

- 1) Engaging and supporting all students in learning
- 2) Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
- 3) Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
- 4) Planning instruction and designing learning experiences

for all students

- 5) Assessing students for learning
- 6) Developing as a professional educator
- 7) Collaborating as a member of the school and community

Each standard contains strategies by which they are to be met. The standards and strategies provide an articulated vision of expectations and what "teachers of excellence" should strive for in their profession. Ultimately, an effective teacher is the goal. School districts, teacher preparation programs, and credentialing organizations now have a tool for guidance in recognizing standards for effective teaching.

ND Professional Teacher Standards will be a guide to monitor and assess professional growth of a teacher. The intent is for teachers and school districts to be on the same page regarding competency. By writing these standards, the committee is empowering districts and teachers to align teaching standards with professional development toward the overall goal of increased student achievement. Currently, the standards are being reviewed by education organizations and associations throughout the state.

ND Professional Teacher Standards documents can be found on the NDPDAC blog website: <http://blogs.edutech.nodak.edu/professionaldevelopmentnd/>.

■ SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Continued from page 5

recently appointed to represent school boards on the North Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors.

Ben strives to be informed about emerging educational and governance issues and exemplifies board member leadership. He is truly deserving of this recognition!

Nonrenewal Field Reps

Board members and superintendents interested in serving as a nonrenewal field representative to assist schools with nonrenewal of teachers please call NDSBA by **January 6, 2011**.



mark your calendar

2011 NDSBA Negotiations Seminar

February 4-5, 2011
Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck

2011 NSBA Annual Conference

April 9-11, 2011
San Francisco, CA

2011 NDSBA Annual Convention

PRE-CONVENTION
NDSBA New Member Seminar

NDCSA School Law Seminar
Thursday, October 27, 2011
Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck

ANNUAL CONVENTION

October 28 & 29, 2011
Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck